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Contents

PAGE

- 81 Communication in the Elementary School
DORA V. SMITH
- 87 Language in the Total School Program
MARION EDMAN
- 93 Language Teaching In A Changing World
LOU LABRANT
- 98 Young Children Learn the Ways of Democracy
FRANCES R. HORWICH
- 103 How Much Language Form Shall We Teach?
SOPHIA C. CAMENISCH
- 108 Democratic Practices in the Language Arts
BERNICE BAXTER
- 112 Adventures in Democratic Living
ANNA M. WIECKING
- 114 The Educational Scene
- 116 Review and Criticism

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THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW

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No. 3

Building the Lines of Communi- cation in the Elementary School

DORA V. SMITH

University of Minnesota

From her wide observation and experience in the field of the language arts, Dr. Smith abundantly illustrates her basic viewpoint concerning the role of language instruction in the educative process. This forceful article again demonstrates the author's insight into the school's task and its problems in the face of the desperate social need.

—Editor.

Language is the basic instrument of thought, of social intercourse, and of community life. Recent months have given us an amazing spectacle of the use of language to inform, to instruct, and to command. Men of every nation have recognized its power to weld together great social groups, to move them to unity of feeling and of action, or maliciously to divide them by the propagation of falsehoods with deliberate intent to deceive.

The Social Nature Of Language

What first impresses us as we define the responsibilities of the language arts program in these terms is that language is a *social* skill. Use of it cements or disrupts personal and social ties vital to everyday life. Yesterday a little Irish

woman called a friend on the telephone to report the arrival of a long-awaited letter from her niece in Belfast. When asked for the news, she replied, "I haven't opened it yet. I just wanted you to know it had *come!*" How lightly we use the term "sharing experiences through writing!" How much more is involved than the correct use of verb and subject! The separations of wartime give a new meaning to the personal values of power in the use of language.

In public affairs, Roosevelt speaks in Washington of the "four freedoms" and people throughout the world thrill to his message. An edict goes out from the Capitol that shoes are rationed, and before bedtime, instructions reach the smallest village in the United States.

Recently the head of a large business firm named the two chief skills in language needed for success in business: simple clarity, and courtesy and tact in one's approach to customers. He deplored the handicap to business of the verbose legal phraseology in which government regulations are couched and gave examples of misunderstandings, hard feel-

ings, and loss of patronage due to crudeness of expression and lack of common courtesy in business.

Clearly, the use of language is a social enterprise involving human relationships and emotions as well as accuracy in the expression of ideas and correctness in the use of forms. If this be true, practice in the use of language in school should be carried on in a social setting. It should serve a social purpose, and should involve real human relationships between writer and reader or speaker and listener.

Language Basic To Social Experience

Recently a group of children in the Tuttle School in Minneapolis began a study of the industries in a nearby terminal. They wrote letters asking permission to send groups of pupils to see the products made, the processes used, and the raw materials necessary. They invited officials to come to school to talk with them. As a result of group discussion and planning, the work was organized and individuals and committees made responsible for securing and reporting information, for interviewing parents and other workers associated with the plants, for "looking up" in books, magazines, and advertising pamphlets, all they could find to supplement the firsthand contacts of the early part of the study, and for devising means of sharing their findings with the class.

One group returned with a request for greater co-operation among the children of the school in crossing the street at an intersection much used by trucks. Plans were made for presenting this request to the children in the lower grades. The question of strikes became the subject of a somewhat heated panel. Priorities and the necessity for rationing and conservation immediately came to the fore. Especially significant were the in-

terests aroused in the countries from which the raw materials had come.

Analysis of the language and reading skills developed in the unit revealed the fact that informative materials and practical uses of language predominated. The teacher, therefore, directed the attention of the children to the many books available about boys and girls in the countries opened up by the study. A discussion ensued as to what children in foreign lands they had already become acquainted with through books. Heidi and Switzerland topped the list. The children visited the library to find many more books suited to their purpose and are now engaged in determining the best means of sharing the stories read.

A check against the list of skills in writing, speaking, reading, and listening enumerated in the *Experience Curriculum* of the National Council of Teachers of English shows that hardly a one failed to be *used* and *taught* during the unit and in relationship to a real purpose in a social situation. In addition, personal responsibility for clarity of thinking, for substantiation of facts, and for sincerity and honesty in expression were emphasized. Knowledge of how words affect others, of courteous methods of approach to one's fellows and to one's superiors, and use of parliamentary procedures by means of which discussion may be kept co-operative and democratic were given major stress. Actual grappling with ideas, arriving at personal convictions, and the ordering of one's thoughts for presentation for others were given equal emphasis with the mere reproducing of material read or heard by the pupils.

Language Accuracy Important

In any program concerned with the social effects of language, accuracy in the

mechanics of English assumes a new importance. Use of *seen* for *saw*, misplacing the *e* in *Gratefully* yours, running sentence together without periods or capitals, or failure to articulate clearly or to use one's voice pleasantly all draw attention to themselves and away from the business in hand. Errors become socially serious when they hinder clarity or ease of communication, reflect unfavorably upon the maturity of the worker, or raise questions concerning his reliability. A little boy in a first grade class was asked the other day to read his neighbor's account of a recent blizzard. He stepped back angrily from the blackboard and announced in disgust, "How can I read it? No stoppers! No starters!" That is the real test of adequacy in the use of punctuation and capital letters. One cannot engage in team play without abiding by the rules. Composition can do much to release individuality, but in matters of adjustment to recognized conventions, it owes children the discipline of conforming. The end is greater effectiveness and ease in communication. There is real motive for mastery. In the case of grammatical usage in oral communication, the presence and interruptions of others and the interplay of conflicting emotions and ideas appear to alter the pupil's pattern of response as they do in normal social intercourse. In contrast to this situation, the problem of filling in blanks in the solitary quiet and security of a desk nailed down to the floor becomes a ludicrously artificial method of judging a child's adequacy in language for everyday life.

Positive values in composition such as the use of words suited to the occasion, the telling phrase, the strong, well built sentence, or the carefully unified and

organized paragraph need to be called to the children's attention both in what they write and in what they read. Development of positive standards of evaluation, especially from public and personal utterances which the children have actually seen achieve desired results over the radio, in print, in business or social intercourse, or in the classroom, is a fundamentally important part of any program in the language arts. Time out to consider these things, before, after, and in the course of whatever enterprises are under way is well spent because it gives such instruction a real social setting.

A Co-operative "Climate"

Language is an intimately personal thing—subject to restrictions imposed by the personality and experience of the speaker. Fear of saying anything at all and desire to talk all the time without having anything to say are serious problems in the early elementary school. Progress in both depends upon the sympathy and tact with which the child is guided, and the care with which his social relationships are watched in the classroom. Poise comes within, but it is dictated by the attitudes of one's associates and one's sense of security in the group. At the same time, one's right to be heard depends upon the sincerity and value of one's contribution. Only through a genuinely social quality in classroom life can such powers be engendered. The yearbook committee of the National Society for the Study of Education now at work on the problem of developing morale in the public schools concludes that the most important single factor is the effect of the "general climate" of the classroom in which the child is actively engaged in co-operative undertakings. Such activity in the language arts is of

greatest educative value when each child is making the peculiar contribution which his temperament, his abilities, and his background permit him to make, and when the group as a whole achieves a larger purpose through the pooling of ideas and co-operative effort than any one individual could have achieved alone.

How Language Power Grows

Research, particularly at the pre-school and primary levels, is making us daily more conscious of how effectiveness in the use of language grows. Language power and thought power go hand in hand, and the basis of both is enriched experience. In the life of the young child, experience gives meaning to words. Words pave the way for the extension and manipulation of experience. Added encounters with people and things increase vocabulary. Deepened experience provides extension of meanings and increased exactness in the use of words already known. Power to generalize from a series of specific instances becomes a significant measure of developing maturity. Grappling with ideas increases the complexity of expression, and clarity and logic grow with the grasp of essential relationships and the testing of thought by experience.

Upon one thing all students of language development agree. There is a consistent underlying course in progress toward mature speech; but the age at which individuals reach each stage of development varies with the pattern of their own personal growth. No two children reach the same stage at identically the same time. The infant's development in vocabulary is slowed up while he devotes his energy to learning to walk or to getting his teeth. Between these spurts of growth in physique, he makes large

gains in the use of language. One outstrips the other in the number of teeth he has at a given time; another, in the age at which he learns to walk; still another in the rate at which he acquires a command of words. It is as illogical to expect all children to achieve the same stage of maturity in language at a given age or grade level as it is to expect that they will all weigh the same or measure the same in height. So-called minimum essentials in language, in so far as the term applies to the attainment of a certain level of mastery of specific elements of language by all children in the same grade are simply untenable if one accepts development of control over language as a part of the general process of the child's growth. All the teacher can do is to furnish a nourishing and stimulating environment, direct the child's linguistic growth in the right direction, and keep him progressing beyond his present stage of development.

New Language Problems

The amazing influence of the radio today places upon the language arts program a peculiar responsibility for teaching adequate habits of listening. Not only is the wise choice of programs important, but development of a technique of listening which insures getting the most from what is offered. Words on the wing are hard to catch. Like the practice in hitting a moving target which our airmen have found indispensable in the present war, practice in grasping ideas which move rapidly on whether one attends carefully or not is essential to intelligent listening. The problem is two-fold: first, to hear and to reproduce accurately what has been said, and second, to examine critically what has been accurately heard. For the first, concentration, accuracy of comprehension, grasp of

main ideas from the midst of a wealth of detail, and clarity of recall are necessary. Frequently, in the second, the real target is concealed by a smoke screen of emotion, verbiage, or deliberate confusion of the issues. Separation of facts from vague emotional appeal, the necessity for substantiating evidence, for weighing ideas, for detecting flaws in reasoning, and recognition of deliberate attempts to deceive—these problems, in an elemental way, begin to arise in the upper elementary grades. They may even be detected in the classroom discussions of the children themselves. A program of instruction which aims to meet the needs of everyday life cannot fail to give attention to them.

Reading as a means to growth follows the same pattern as other elements of the language program. It is based upon linguistic skills already achieved in speaking. Its major value is as a means to ends greater than reading itself. The use of reading for purposes of solving problems, seeking information, and extending experience parallels exactly the principles already outlined for language. In a unit such as the one in Tuttle School, the skills of reading and of expression develop together throughout the activity, with no abnormal divorce between getting the ideas of another from the printed page and recording one's own for the benefit of someone else. In such an activity, reading also becomes a social skill of the first magnitude. Mastery of vocabulary, comprehension of sentences and paragraphs, grasp of main and subordinate ideas, critical evaluation of what is read, and application of it to problems important to the reader, assume a new significance when taught and learned in relationship to use, their value proved in their contribution to the whole enterprise.

The use of reference sources, mastery of the alphabet as a major reference tool, and habitual use of school and public library take on a new importance as children recognize that books answer their questions, help them solve their problems, and open up to them new reaches of thought and feeling. As in the case of language, time taken out for consideration and practice of skills in reading pays dividends in the development of mastery for use in activities of social value.

Finding Satisfaction In Books

But reading as a tool is not enough. Mere correlation of reading with topics pursued in science, social studies, and the like, fails to take into account one of the main functions of reading in the lives of boys and girls. That is correlation of reading with their personal interests, their more intimate moods and aspirations. For example, reading affords boys and girls the power of identifying themselves with the heroic, the breath-taking, or the admirable in characters who frequent the pages of books. The absorption of children in the comics is evidence of their need for this type of satisfaction through reading. Stories of other girls like themselves, who do surpassing things have a wide appeal to girls. They crave mystery and romance. Enthusiastic guidance of recreational reading in terms of the normal interests of boys and girls is as important a part of the program in the language arts as is reading related to more specific curricular problems. Its function is to make accessible and appealing to boys and girls a wide range of good reading materials which they cannot be expected to find for themselves, and to establish in relationship to their everyday experience permanent habits of seeking satisfaction in good books.

Literature enriches living for boys and girls both by giving the charm of novelty to the things of every day and by making the imaginative seem real. The result is more than acquaintance with good literature—more even than genuine personal enjoyment. It is an increased sensitiveness to life. A line of clothes flapping in the breeze looks different ever after to a child who has enjoyed Dorothy Aldis's lines:

Stockings twisting in a dance,
Pajamas very tripping,
And every little pair of pants
Upside down
And skipping.¹

Boys and girls find a new sense of enjoyment in the rain as the poet couples the music of poetry with its fall:

Tap-tap-tapping
At my window pane
The cool slim fingers of the dancing rain. . .
Tinkling merry laughter—
Then along the street
The patter, patter, patter
Of the rain's quick feet.²

¹ Aldis, Dorothy. *Hop, Skip, and Jump*, p. 83.

They hold their breath with Wee Gillis on the mountain side or with the pirate and Peter in *Peter Pan* when the tell-tale tick of the alarm clock reveals the ominous approach of the crocodile. They laugh uproariously with Charles Caryll's Robinson Crusoe as he solemnly relates the incidents of his afternoon walk with the animals. They weep with Heidi, separated from her grandfather and from the mountains she loves and begin all over again when the little lame girl finds that she can walk. They swell with pride in America as they read of the fulfillment of the dreams of Maminka in this land of opportunity for which she had yearned so many years in Bohemia, and they long with the little girl in *Blue Willow* for the time when no child in all America must live the life of an unwanted transient.

These insights, these stirrings of emotion and imagination, are a part of the child's true heritage.

² Quoted from Bonaro Wilkinson's *Poetic Way of Release*, p. 18.

Planning Language Growth in the Total School Program

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Language development occurs wherever language is used. If the development is to be wholesome, it must be carefully planned, not only in the "language period," but throughout the entire school day. Dr. Edman here offers concrete guidance for the teacher in creating the conditions for desirable and continuous language growth in the so-called "content subjects."

—Editor.

Factors Responsible For Failure

The curriculum of the school has always given lip service to its responsibility for developing in children those powers and abilities which would insure them freedom in expressing their thoughts accurately and effectively. While some progress has been made toward this goal, evaluations of growth in the ability of children to speak and write effectively show that schools have come far short of the kind of training boys and girls must have if true freedom of speech and expression is to be assured for our society. There are no doubt many factors responsible for this failure on the the part of schools. Three seem to be of major importance.

The first is the tradition that school must be a quiet place in which, at best, only one person speaks at a given time. Unfortunately, observational studies have shown that this one person is usually the teacher. Written composition, on the other hand, has always been given con-

siderable emphasis in the school program. The chief end of a great deal of the writing, however, seems to have been the opportunity to demonstrate one's ability in avoiding errors in spelling, paragraphing, sentence structure, punctuation, and in showing mastery over other matters of form and correctness. Important as correctness is in these areas, it is not the essence of freedom in personal expression, and should be the secondary, not the primary goal, in the language program.

The second factor is the persistence of the *recitation* as a means of interchanging ideas. Anyone who has ever attended a school knows the technique. The teacher asks a question pertaining to a given section of the textbook, previously assigned for reading; a child raises his hand and is invited to repeat the words of the text as nearly as he can remember them. If he answers correctly, the process continues around the class; if he does not, he is properly disgraced and the identical question given to someone in the group with a more retentive memory. While educational theorists have long decried this sort of classroom activity, general observation forces one to admit that it is nearly as prevalent today as it was in the days when textbooks further relieved both teacher and pupil by printing, along with subject matter, not only the questions to be raised, but also the correct answers to them. This method of question and answer, neither then nor now, gives freedom of speech and expression.

The third factor in the school's failure is the concentration of the teaching of expression in what is called a "language" period. Particularly disastrous results follow when the chief emphasis of the language period is to teach correctness of speech rather than to stimulate growth in the powers of expression. Such a narrow conception of the responsibility of the school to give children freedom in speech, both in its segregation from the total pattern of school and life experiences and in its emphasis on only one aspect of the entire language program, makes the resulting expressional activities seem artificial and unimportant to the child.

It is not suggested here that all language training be left entirely to incidental teaching. The separate language period has a definite place in the school curriculum, but the activities carried on during such a period must be vitalized through close contact with the language experiences growing out of the content subject fields of the school and out of school and community living. It is here definitely recommended that the chief motivation and direction for all language activities in the grades of the elementary school be closely tied into the total life pattern of the children and particularly into the total curricular pattern of the school. The special language period becomes then a time for remedial teaching based upon diagnosis of performance in other classes or for gaining proficiency in skills needed for purposeful activity soon to be attempted.

Principles Of Organization

The teacher of language who would develop children's powers of expression to their full potentiality must recognize two very important considerations: (1) that

power in language is conditioned by experience, real and vicarious and (2) that individuals normally use language only in social situations. He who speaks expects someone to listen; he who writes expects someone to read. Only the very young child or the psychopathic adult talks to himself. Only the mature artist writes for mere practice.

If these basic considerations are to be put into practice into the language program, the following principles must be followed:

1. Language must be a vital part of all the experiences of the child upon which the school draws in its attempts to educate him. This means that opportunity must be given him to express what he has experienced through his own free interpretation of it (not in terms set down in a textbook), to relate it to previous experiences, to refine its meaning through the acquisition of new vocabulary and through new meanings attached to known words and expressions; to evaluate its importance; to plan further action in the light of what has been revealed.
2. The child must feel a compelling purpose in what he has to say further than to get a mark in a teacher's class book. This purpose is usually best set up in terms of group needs and group planning. Tom had an uncle who has movies on Mexico which Tom says he will show to the children in school if he is invited to do so. The members of the class who are commissioned to write a note to the principal asking permission to invite Tom's uncle to come to school feel the pressure of group responsibility in making an effective presentation of the situation to Miss Jones so that her consent will be forthcoming. The

boy who has been assigned to give a talk on hobbies may tell about his stamp collection with considerable enthusiasm if he is really interested in philately. His audience may or may not respond with equal enthusiasm. If the class, however, is engaged in finding information about the great heroes of South America, the boy who has a collection of South American stamps bearing the portraits of a number of these men, will present them with the understanding that he is meeting a social purpose in sharing his treasures. Both his presentation and the class reception of it are fundamentally conditioned by this awareness. Vitalizing the language program means fundamentally setting it up so that children can achieve their felt purposes and needs.

3. Language activity must take place in an audience situation. This means that whatever the child says or writes is to be heard or read by someone, preferably in order to carry out purposes planned by the group. This means that an informal, socialized atmosphere must prevail in the classroom where there is give and take of ideas, where disagreements can be voiced and perhaps resolved, where new information is sought to clear up points which are not understood, where statements can be challenged, and where group thinking can be formulated. New techniques must be used if these objectives are to be met. It has been rather clearly demonstrated that groups the size of the average class cannot function effectively as a unit for the free give and take of ideas. A few glib verbalists in a large group are apt to monopolize the discussion and thus those members

who may be most in need of learning to express their ideas have no opportunity to do so. Effective teachers of language must master the techniques of stimulating small group discussions, several of which may be going on simultaneously at a given period during the day. Even young children can learn through practice to become largely self-directing if teachers introduce them gradually to the proper procedures of group discussion. Suitable class room furniture aids greatly in facilitating informal conversation and committee work, but the ingenious teacher with seats screwed to the floor in straight rows can arrange for some socialized language activity.

4. Growth in language skills and correctness must keep pace with growth in language power and must be directly related to it. For this reason minimum essentials in language for a particular grade cannot be set up with any degree of definiteness. No one can predict accurately in advance if a third grade class will need to acquire skill in the use of the telephone, for one cannot be certain that a situation will develop where a class feels the need for learning this kind of communication. Who can predict whether the need for the use of quotation marks will arise in grade 2B or 4A? The only safe criterion for the teacher to follow in setting up the program in skills and usage is to base it on the general language development of her class. Children must be helped to master those skills which they need in presenting effectively the ideas which they have made their own. Setting up language activities only for the sake of correctness defeats the very purpose of such activities.

Steps In Pupil-Teacher Training

The language program, then, is to be looked upon as a means to an end; namely, the communication of ideas for a social purpose rather than as an end in itself. How is the teacher to stimulate the class to set up the goals and purposes which will involve desirable language activities? Modern educational practice points to various methods, all of which might be summarized under the term teacher-pupil planning. Under this concept teacher and pupils together discuss the broad objectives within a given area of school living or of the curriculum and plan the attack which is to be made for the realization of these objectives. This method is in direct contradiction to that of dividing a subject into tiny segments, each to be covered in a day and usually cut up into sections covering so many pages of a textbook to be read.

The method of pupil-teacher planning involves these general steps:

1. Arousing interest in the topic to be covered through relating it to known subjects and by showing its importance in current life.
2. Discussing thoroughly what is already known about the subject.
3. Setting purposes for the study
 - (a) Listing questions and topics
 - (b) Making an outline of activities
4. Surveying the resources at hand.
 - (a) Books in the classroom, school and public library
 - (b) Visual aids
 - (c) Community resources such as persons to be interviewed, and those who might be invited to come to the school; realia of various types which might be collected for an exhibit; places which might be visited.
 - (d) Resources outside the community such as pamphlets, pictures, etc., which might be secured from government agencies, travel bureaus, and other sources.
5. Considering the techniques and skills needed to carry on the study.
 - (a) Use of library aids such as card catalog, picture files, etc.
 - (b) Use of indexes, charts, maps and tables of contents in books.
 - (c) Note-taking.
 - (d) Interviewing and telephoning.
 - (e) Letter writing.
 - (f) Panel discussions, committee reports, dramatizations, etc.
 - (g) Individual reports.
 - (h) Skills such as handwriting, spelling, correct form, punctuation, usage, etc.
6. Planning for division of labor in covering all phases of the study.
 - (a) The core activities to be covered by all pupils in the class.
 - (b) Group and committee activities.
 - (c) Individual reading and reports.
7. Setting up a tentative schedule for the sharing of information received through various sources such as reading, visits, interviews, etc.
8. Providing for summarization and evaluation of the activity.

An Example From The Social Studies

The fact that eight separate phases of planning have been suggested does not mean that they are taken in the order suggested, covered by the class, and then completely forgotten. The eight are constantly interwoven with one another, recur again and again as the study progresses, and are developed in new ways as activities are carried out. As an example of how such planning may be car-

ried out in a class in social studies studying South America, suggestive topics are listed below. The outline is by no means complete, but simply attempts to indicate the type of language activity which goes on during each phase of the study.¹

1. *Arousing interest in South America and showing its importance in current affairs*

- (a) Discussion of coffee rationing and the rubber shortage leads into a consideration of the many products which come from South America.
- (b) Measurement of air distance on the map reveals how we must strive to be friends with the people of these countries if the western hemisphere is to be protected.
- (c) Pictures of various aspects of life in the many countries of South America portray its many sidedness and the wide variety of conditions prevailing there.
- (d) Stories of the early conquerors who found such fabulous riches give a flavor of romance to the early peoples.
- (e) Analysis of recent current events emphasize the timeliness of the topic.

2. *Reviewing what is already known.* Such questions as these might be discussed.

- (a) In what ways are the South American countries like Mexico and Central America? (These areas have been studied previously.)
- (b) Have you seen or heard anything about South America in the movies recently? In the newspapers? Over the radio?

¹The writer is indebted to Dr. Gertrude Whipple for the many ideas contained in her bulletin *South America as a Center of Interest for Reading*. Published by the Detroit Board of Education, December, 1942. File No. 2899.

- (c) Do you have anything at home which came from South America?
- (d) Have you ever talked with anyone who has traveled there or seen movies taken by a person who has visited there?
- (e) What stories have you read about boys and girls in South America?

3. *Setting purposes for the study.*

- (a) To learn how the Indian tribes of early days lived and how they acquired so much wealth.
- (b) To find out what it is like to live in different parts of the continent today:

Jungles of Brazil
Mountains of Chile
Plains of Argentina

- (c) To learn how some of the products are raised: coffee, cocoa, wheat, Brazil nuts, etc.
- (d) To find out who the great heroes of South America are.
- (e) To learn about the great cities of the continent.

4. *Outlining Activities.*

- (a) Making a products map showing where the various crops are raised.
- (b) Making a scrapbook with drawings of the costumes of peoples in various parts of South America with short descriptive paragraphs about each.
- (c) Planning a table exhibit showing a typical Brazilian village (or some other type of life).
- (d) Arranging a bulletin board of pictures gathered from travel bureaus, magazines, etc.
- (e) Preparing a book of riddles on South American animals.
- (f) Setting up a series of discussion groups, each to present information about one group of people,

one country, one section of the country, the raising of one product, etc.

- (g) Dramatizing scenes from the lives of South America's great heroes.
 - (h) Scheduling a series of reports on fictional books pertaining to South America.
 - (i) Arranging exhibits of realia, drawings, etc.
 - (j) Making a dictionary of Spanish words and terms.
 - (k) Planning a final program as a culmination of all activities.
5. *Surveying the resources.*
- (a) Analyzing texts and readers for suitable materials.
 - (b) Making a bibliography of library materials.
 - (c) Consulting reference books, picture files, etc.
 - (d) Finding materials at home in old magazines, newspapers, etc.
 - (e) Writing letters to travel bureaus.
 - (f) Inviting persons with special information to school or planning to interview them.
 - (g) Planning "talkies" to accompany silent films or slides.
 - (h) Writing letters to children in South America.

The language techniques needed in carrying on a study of this sort must be extremely varied. Likewise they must necessarily be much the same whether the class were considering "South America" or "Fur Bearing Animals." For that reason this method of approach gives

splendid opportunity for the constant review and relearning of needed skills and techniques.

The teacher must guide the class in its planning so that a rounded program of language experiences is provided for each child. There should be a basic core of language activities for the entire class; that is, every pupil will be expected to do some reading, some committee work, some individual reports. Unless balance of this sort is provided, it may be that James who has a wide acquaintance with interesting people may depend solely upon interviewing to get information needed by the class and may rarely get practice in reading. Similarly, Mary, who is a good committee leader, may always report orally on her investigations and fail to get needed practice in writing.

The type of language program described here demands the most creative powers of the teacher. No set method or sequence of procedures in developing children's expressional powers will serve to provide adequate language activities to help them meet successfully the many new experiences which constantly confront them nor enable them to interpret intelligently previous experiences in the light of recent ones. To guide children in language activities which will insure their ability to interpret for themselves and for others the full value of their total pattern of experiences is to insure the maximum use of the most valuable resource of a democracy. This is the challenge which faces the teacher of language today.

Language Teaching In A Changing World

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The editor of EDUCATIONAL METHOD and chairman of the Committee on Language Communication of the National Council of Teachers of English tells of the growing power of language in the rapidly shifting world scene, and suggests ways in which the school may utilize this instrument most effectively.

—Editor.

Today in a world of hyperbole, it is easy to make sweeping statements and to have them accepted. We must therefore be cautious when thinking of our work. Teachers are, by the nature of their work, largely outside immediate war activities. They spend their days with children, whose greatest contribution will be made after the war. Hence teaching is a unique profession, dealing with remote rather than immediate influence over society. This may in reality make teachers a very powerful group in America, but at the moment it may also make us unduly eager to place too high value upon what we are doing.

It would seem, however, that as teachers of the native language we are dealing with an unbelievably powerful tool if we deal with it in terms of the society it interprets. By teachers of language I mean all those who help children and youth to use language in speech, writing, reading, and listening, and who also take responsibility for developing certain attitudes toward language. In this country the language most taught is, of course,

English. Let us consider first some of the general issues involved.

Anyone would have to be very stupid and completely isolated if he failed to note that the war is bringing into our daily experiences, and hence into our speech, relationships with the entire world, and with all the people on its surface. It is almost appalling to realize that soon there will be no places which one cannot visit; that there will no longer be travelers returning from strange lands. Already provincials from our cities (city dwellers *are* often provincial), from our mountains, and our prairie villages are learning rudiments of the languages of primitive tribes in Africa or the South Seas, and of many European tongues. Boys who had never until recently seen New York or Chicago or San Francisco are visiting Ireland, Iceland, India, Australia, and New Guinea. All this we are taking as a matter of course. But we should remember that these experiences must be communicated, and that the major tool of communication is language. There are probably many who will expect the result to be merely a few words new in the English tongue. Greater changes are, however, to be expected.

Old words will take on new content. *Religion*, for example, which to many has meant relationship to a local church, will be widely increased in content as these men meet with those from many religions, and learn to respect Moslems or the followers of more primitive faiths.

Other words—*heathen*, to illustrate—may lose meaning and value. These are, you may say, individual experiences and do not change the more generally accepted meanings. It is important to note, however, that general meanings change through accumulation of individual experiences. "Red Sailors in New York Port" is a headline which carries far different connotations from what the same headline would have carried in 1935.

Other developments here at home are significant, and will have their results in the language regardless of the attitude of teachers. There was a time when we spoke of "good" English as "the King's English." Some years ago most of us gave up complaining that someone "murdered the King's English," but we have heard the expression. It is typical of a class standard which may or may not have had its values. We have also had a "literary English," relic of the day when languages had two rather distinct roles. Those of us who read a little Latin were usually surprised when we met our first Latin play to discover that the carefully inflected prose or verse which we had read in Cicero and Vergil was far indeed from the language of the streets of Rome. Many factors were involved—the few books of that age, restricted educational opportunities, rigid class distinctions, and the prevalence of foreigners among the slave groups. Even in our century, textbooks have emphasized the impropriety of using in written work contractions acceptable in speech. Our present struggle over fragments in the writing of children is in part our attempt to differentiate still between a spoken and a literary language. Whether these two will ever become identical is doubtful, but their approach is to be noted as one of the changes of today.

At least in its earlier years, the radio was largely limited to literary broadcasts. Broadcasting companies hired persons to censor or correct the "faulty" accents of speakers, and a standard pronunciation was encouraged. Today accents from the whole of America and England fall on our ears daily. The westerner who used to think of the Harvard or Oxford accent as strange or affected now listens to news in that brand of English; and the Harvard or Oxford graduate learns what he most wants to understand from a Texas drawl or an excited Cockney.

What all of this will mean ten or twenty years hence we as teachers of the language probably can not predict. But certainly it will mean many changes, changes which we will be unable to prevent if we would. It is important that we do not set up in our class-rooms prejudices or snobberies which will make our students less instead of better able to understand, enjoy, and use this language. Such a mingling of tongues took place in England from 1066 to 1400. The teacher who understands the history of English will find current changes interesting and stimulating.

Certainly the next generation will have to understand much more about the world in general than did the last one, and a great deal of this understanding will have to come through reading. This reading will, if it is successful, have two outstanding characteristics: it will be reading for understanding and will be selected purposefully by the reader. No longer can we afford classes where thirty youngsters drone out the same selection, with emphasis on correct pronunciation, stopping at commas, and answering stereotyped questions. A recent issue of this magazine has emphasized the point, which will not be labored here.

The war has emphasized the fact that we do not always satisfy ourselves when we select something which is "good" in itself. We must choose between values, often conflicting ones. It may be desirable to me and for me to eat meat six days a week; but it is necessary for others to eat meat also, and there is not enough to go around. I give up meat on two or three days so that all may have some. That is simple, and we accept the decision with cheerfulness. The same principle holds in reading.

Too frequently we give children books which have enough value that we call them "good," forgetting that there are other, perhaps more important values which we are thereby missing. It is actually possible that reading will narrow rather than broaden understanding. Some children's books, moreover, are directed toward encouraging a naive, simple acceptance of externals which we seem at times to hold as desirable for children. Teachers would do well to examine some of the books about China and the Philippines and Japan to see how many depict these peoples unrealistically; how many present the children there as cunning looking dolls, innocent, even stupid, involved in pushing around recalcitrant donkeys or playing light-heartedly with kites, and sleeping happily and gratefully on practically nothing.

It is as speech and thought that we all use language most. If we are successfully to talk and think and write out our problems in this most complicated world, it is utterly necessary that teachers help youngsters to use language honestly and effectively. Certain exponents of language theories have attempted to make us think that a full understanding of language would solve all human problems. No such

extreme theory is suggested here. Possession of a desirable object will not be settled amicably by a discussion of the true meaning of the word *mine*, though the law sometimes makes forceful settlement on that basis.

Although we may not believe that language properly used and understood is a cure-all for the world's ills, we must admit that improperly used it may seriously impede progress. Language is our major device for communication, and is our chief device for utilizing the past and affecting the future. How then can we help children to use language effectively and helpfully? At least a few suggestions may be offered.

First, let us keep always in our minds and in theirs that language is to be used to communicate from one person to another his knowledge or his feelings and thoughts; that unless we are telling something which ought to be told it matters little how correctly it is said, and that the manner of the telling depends upon the purpose. Let us have no more of assignments which emphasize quantity, place form above meaning, or insist on structure which is not the child's. Perhaps a few illustrations will be desirable.

Far too often as a people we are led astray by orators or writers whose words sound fine and smooth, but whose meanings are false, shallow, or misleading. We make their path easy when we approve essays, stories, or poems which are imitations or are full of words used for the sake of sound. We are responsible for such writing when we approve the correctly punctuated, correctly spelled, and neatly written paper which says nothing of importance, as against a less attractive but sincere account or argument. Children can and should learn to

write correctly; but *first should be sincere, purposeful expression of the child's own ideas*. Hitler's philosophy would be no better if it were correctly written. Our very emphasis on form and approved usage perhaps encouraged many Americans to disregard the terrible threats of *Mein Kampf* when they were told that it was the work of a near-illiterate.

A boy recently reported at home that he could use more new words than any other pupil in his class. The family wisely asked why he needed them. Apparently the youngster had been victim of a "vocabulary building" unit, from which he had gained that most unsound idea—that a word is a good thing in itself. Such a basis is a dangerous one to any child, and to our society.

Similar unsound attitudes can be the result of being taught to "write just anything" (or to write on the teacher's topic); to spend time correcting sentences which someone else has written about nothing of importance; to change one's structure merely to have a variety of sentence forms; and so on through a whole series of assignments based on the principle that form is first and meaning second.

Belief that a dictionary definition is a final meaning is another fallacy often encouraged. Too many people today are hopeful of discovering what ought to be done by reliance on definitions. Not too long ago a nation's waters were defined by a three-mile limit! Children need to learn that definitions change as circumstances change.

What is a more positive side of the picture? First of all, a program rich in group experiences, in first-hand study of realities about us, and abundant *need* for exchange of ideas. This again is in con-

trast to a program where the chief demand for communication is between the child and the teacher.

The depression years following 1929 found us with a consistently growing percentage of mentally ill persons. It is thinkable that the post-war years will be equally trying. One of the many outlets offering release to children and adults is the ability to talk or write out one's conflicts or ideas. Work in the arts—plastic, graphic, or verbal—is immensely valuable; but verbal arts have the advantage of being universally available and inexpensive. A wholesome language program encourages children to tell or write stories, to express their ideas and feelings, and to exchange these accounts with each other.

"But," says a teacher, "my children have nothing important to say. They don't have anything to write." If that is so (and probably it is not) there are several things to note: children should be having experiences sufficiently important and significant that they will have something to say and to ask; they should have a free opportunity for saying these things; and the teacher should investigate the possibility that the important things they are now thinking are being said to someone outside the classroom and not mentioned in the presence of the teacher. Perhaps no book on teaching has made this point more clearly than Natalie Cole's *Arts in the Classroom*. All who doubt that pupils can have much to say, and that it is an important something, should read this book.

In some localities communication between teacher and pupil and between pupils is being limited because the children speak or hear a foreign language at home. Instead of using this understanding which comes from being bi-

lingual, the teachers speak of these children as "handicapped." (This is undoubtedly a transferred epithet; the teacher is the one handicapped.) Constant correction of accent and structure, and comments calling attention to the child's variation in speech may have serious consequences. These include shame of parents and scorn of their speech and ideas (often producing such problems as are discussed in Margaret Mead's recent book, *Keep Your Powder Dry*); a sense of inferiority in the presence of children whose parents were born in this country; and a generally negative attitude toward school, resulting frequently in poor work and the rating of "dull."

The foregoing discussion does not imply that teachers are to avoid the correcting of papers, nor that children are not to be encouraged to improve what they write or say. Such corrections and improvements take a proper place when the material is respected by child and teacher. Both then have a legitimate

motive for making the language more beautiful and effective. Teachers who follow the rule of emphasizing meaning and true communication find children eager to accept conventional form, and to choose words carefully. But the choice is then in terms of the purposes of the writer or speaker, and not in terms of artificial or superficial standards.

As was stated at the first of this paper, language alone cannot solve the problems of the world. Language is, however, one of the most important inventions of man, an invention ever changing with the changing of man's relations and his devices for living. How the coming generation will use that instrument is most important. It can become a means for communication or (as it is actually in some parts of the world, not excluding situations in our own) an instrument of deceit and frustration. Teachers should consider carefully what they are doing with the most intimate subject in the curriculum.

Young Children Learn The Ways of Democracy

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Can children of the primary grades learn the meaning of America, of freedom, of patriotism? Dr. Horwich tells of the ways in which books and language expression have invested these and other words with vital content drawn from the experiences of young children.—Editor.

In many elementary schools the day is begun by "pledging allegiance" to the flag. The children have memorized the words and even in the kindergarten repeat this pledge with their eyes focused directly on the American Flag. The observer who watches as well as participates in this experience can only wonder what is going through the minds of these young children.

Since our entry into this second world war schools have concentrated on the teaching of patriotism. *The Star Spangled Banner*, *America The Beautiful*, *God Bless America*, *Bring New Glory To Old Glory*, and many other patriotic songs are sung lustily by children of every age. The sale of defense stamps is a vital part of the elementary school curriculum. Contests and competitive campaigns of every variety are encouraged by teachers and carried on by children in an endeavor to help our government meet its financial need. Scrap and rubber, no matter how small the quantity, is held firmly in mittened hands regardless of how uncooperative the weather man may be. These are but a few of the ways in which young children in the kindergarten and primary

grades are helping their country. They do it wholeheartedly because they are asked to do so by their teachers and parents. They want to be helpful not only for the individual satisfaction received therefrom but also for the social recognition given to those who participate in the war effort. All who help in this fight for freedom are considered patriotic and good citizens.

The Realm Of Confusion

To the five, six, seven, and eight-year-old, what does the fight for freedom mean? Who are not already free? Who rules them and how is it done? Where do these young children get their information about such things? They hear much; much more than we adults ever suspect. They listen intensely because we have so taught them. From infancy their lives have been built around listening to older children and adults who tell them truth and fiction about themselves, their families, their homes and all that constitutes their world. In addition children hear information over the radio, sometimes planned for them, but more often intended for the ears of an interested adult.

The eyes of young children have been trained to look for pictures and signs which will help them solve their problems through the acquisition of new material. Industry, business, and politicians have overwhelmed children with pictorial and reading material far beyond their comprehension but well within their realm of confusion. Likewise movies, particularly "shorts" depicting our need

to buy bonds and sacrifice material goods have added many words to the young child's vocabulary and ideas to his total realm of thought. His ability to utilize either or both of these contributions is dependent on his emotional maturity and his understanding of the world in which he finds himself.

They Need Guidance

Children entering school for the first time or passing into another grade need guidance. They want and need some one who knows where to send them to find the missing links, the unknown facts, the parts which make the puzzle complete. That some one is usually the teacher in the school, the parent in the home.

To experience the desire to protect, to fight for, and give all in order to save an ideal, a child must know what the ideal is. To fully appreciate this he needs to understand how it came into being, by whom it was conceived and how it has been maintained. He needs help in realizing that as the needs of people change so do their ideals; new ideas brought into action help people to live more freely and richly. When this freedom is threatened it must be protected and this can be accomplished only when all of us who enjoy it work together. Children need to know about people, all peoples, minority groups as well as those in the majority, and why people behave as they do. In order to understand these problems they look to teachers for help.

Seeking the truth in order to better understand people leads children to two sources; the first, individuals with whom they talk freely and for whom they have respect. The second is an unlimited source available to all, literature and books. Much has been written about the first source by those who are interested in

child development. This article is concerned with helping the child from five through eight years of age gain a knowledge of America and its people from books that are written especially for him.

Using Children's Books

Since often it is difficult for parents to evaluate children's books, it becomes the responsibility of the classroom teacher to do so. As the result of her professional training she has an understanding of children and how they develop. In addition she has the knowledge of children's books and of authors and illustrators who have been successful in reaching children. Therefore the teacher has the privilege of introducing children to books which can serve them throughout life. Just how this introduction takes place can best be illustrated by actual experiences reported to the writer by teachers in the elementary schools of Evanston and Glencoe, Illinois, and observed in her own demonstration class.

A third grade boy proudly announced to his group:

England needs us to help her win the war. She can't do it alone. We licked England once and she hasn't been the same since.

This served as the introduction to a period of verbalization of ideas about England's strength versus that of the United States. It continued for several days and the intensity changed as more information was gathered. The heroism of George Washington and his army, the strength of the desire for freedom and the disadvantages of domination were but a few of the many topics discussed. Many papers were written, committee reports were presented and several very "alive" looking murals were part of this learning situation. Many books were gathered into this one room; all contained information about the Revolutionary War. En-

cyclopedic information with dates, biographic material of heroes, descriptions of battles, stirring stories of war, and finally the music which grew out of this exceedingly difficult period had their place. These children had an entirely new but dynamically realistic concept of the long and difficult struggle for freedom. They saw its value but at the same time felt the tough, hard blows which are concealed by the beautiful uniforms worn by men at war. When they sang the national anthem they knew about what they were singing. They understood for what the symbol known as the American Flag stands.

In the faces of these children the teacher was able to see their understanding of the relationship between the Revolutionary War and this second World War. These children understand clearly the problem of rationing. They realize the value of freedom and genuinely want to help preserve it. Time was given to the problem of struggle and sadness and some might question whether eight-year-old children should be subjected to such information. But 1942 was a year of struggle as will be 1943 and 1944. Children are aware of it and can more easily face it when they have the information which enables them to analyze and then understand.

Answering Children's Questions

This experience was taken from a first grade in which one of the children asked:

Why do we celebrate Lincoln's birthday?

He was a president but daddy said we don't celebrate the birthdays of lots of presidents.

The following comments came from other children before the teacher had an opportunity to answer:

Lincoln was a good president.

President Lincoln was an old man.

President Lincoln was the second presi-

dent. George Washington was the first. Only it's funny because we have Washington's birthday after Lincoln's instead of first.

Lincoln was shot.

Lincoln liked black people.

You mean Negroes.

As a summary of the above contributions, the teacher added:

Yes, President Abraham Lincoln was a very good president who lived in the state of Illinois a long time ago. He liked people and helped them with their problems. He helped Negroes win their freedom so that they could work and be happy. Because he lived in Illinois, we in this state celebrate his birthday.

"Do we have a picture of President Lincoln?" some one asked. The next morning a picture of the president was on the bulletin board. On the book table were the following books:

Abraham Lincoln, by Ingri D'Aulaire and Edgar D'Aulaire, (New York: Doubleday, Doran, Inc., 1940), and *Abe Lincoln, Frontier Boy* by Augusta Stevenson. (Bobbs Merrill, 1940).

It was not expected that these children could read these books but they were genuinely interested in the illustrations and in the short excerpts from the stories which the teacher read to them. In addition books about Negro children such as Helen Bannerman's were read to the children. Although these stories are entirely fictitious they portray Negro children as healthy and socially acceptable children. No books which contain caricatures or in any way portray the Negro child or adult as unattractive were included.

We Learn To Appreciate Each Other

Young children are concerned about each other. They are interested in the way their friends behave. In another first grade there was a Persian girl with long black hair who was accompanied every morning by her mother, who spoke

with a foreign accent. On Friday morning Billy walked over to Georgette and said: "Your mother doesn't talk very well. Why not?" Georgette, at a loss for an answer, came to the teacher. Without delay Billy called: "I know, you are a foreigner."

The teacher took both children to a quiet corner where the following conversation took place:

Billy, who is a foreigner? (asked the teacher).

Poor people.

We aren't poor. My mamma has money to buy me anything I want.

No, Billy, a foreigner is one who was born in some country other than the United States. Georgette's mother and father were born in Persia. Later they came to the United States and then they moved to Chicago and Georgette was born here in Chicago just as you were.

Her hair is black.

Yes, her hair is black and your hair is red and Joan's hair is light brown.

I want to go back and paint. (Off went Georgette feeling happy).

I'm glad I have red hair. (Billy).

A few days later in the same group a handsome little brown eyed boy looked up at the teacher and asked: "Are you Jewish?" "Yes," answered the teacher. "Why do you ask?" "Are all Jewish people rich?" he queried. "No, I am not rich. There are many Jewish people who are not rich. In fact there are many people who are not rich and do not want to be." "Are all Negroes poor?" he added. "No, there are many Negroes who have nice homes and they really enjoy them." With that Burton seemed satisfied and ran off to play.

Here we have two illustrations of children in first grade who are showing their confusion through name calling and unfounded generalizations. Their desire for information and guidance in forming

attitudes rang out clearly. An inventory was taken of the family backgrounds, interests and needs of all children in the group. It became apparent that this group of children wanted to know many things about adults, children, army, navy, animals, houses, holidays, boats, guns and Hitler. These children had experienced one year in kindergarten and one week in first grade. The challenge they thrust before the teacher seemed enormous. It would appear almost insurmountable were it not for the great wealth of information which books offer children; stories and poetry which can be read to them, beautiful illustrations which they may study again and again, and stories they will soon be able to read for themselves. Each day additional books about children of many lands have found their way to the book table. Pictures on the wall are within the eye level of every child in the room. And it was with sincere enthusiasm that Barbara admired Pancho the little Mexican boy in the book with the same name, when she said: "I wish Pancho lived next door to us."

On another day in this same first grade when the story of Mike Mulligan and his Steam Shovel ended, Bobby added, "My daddy is a janitor, too. He has a big building on another street." "Mine's not, he's a teacher in the college," added Freddie. "My papa makes rugs, really pretty ones and he sells them, too," came from Georgette. With that the teacher commented: "Isn't it wonderful to live in a country where our fathers may work where they want to and can be happy?"

The interests of these children indicated to the teacher that it was time to add other books to their already growing collection. What boundaries this discussion will have would be difficult to say

at this time. But as this discussion continues intermittently from time to time—it is hoped that a gradual respect for the work of all as it contributes to a forward moving society will be experienced and understood by even these young children. Immediately there flashed through the mind of this teacher the following books which she placed on the book table:

Lucky Pierre, by Lorraine Beim and Jerrold Beim, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co. 1940); *Mister Ole*, by Richard Bennett, (New York: Doubleday, Doran Co. 1940); *Johanna Arrives*, by Winifred Bromhall, (New York: Knopf. 1941); *Children of the Fiery Mountain*, by Marian, (New York: Dutton & Co.); *In My Mother's House*, by Ann Nolan Clark, (New York: Viking. 1941); *Pedro*, by Marjorie Flack, (New York: Macmillan Co. 1942); *Maminka's Children*, by Elizabeth Orton Jones, (New York: Macmillan Co. 1942).

There are many other books about the way we live, work and travel that should be added to this list.

The Love Of Country Awakens

This last illustration is one which I believe summarizes our point very adequately. It occurred in a second grade in a suburban community. The school building is located in a section of town where the homes are beautifully landscaped and cared for. It was a clear, cold morning when Arthur said: "You know its pretty around here. I hope it always stays that way." "Yes, it is very nice out this morning," answered Miss Smith. "I don't mean the weather. I mean this whole town is pretty. It's pretty just like the towns in England were before they were bombed and burned." As the conversation continued Miss Smith realized that Arthur had had a long talk with his parents. In

their attempt to get him to spend part of his allowance for defense stamps they indulged in many illustrations taken from the countries where actual fighting and destruction is taking place. With emotion creeping into his voice, Arthur added: "But I don't want the Japs to spoil this country. Our summer home is in Estes Park and I want to go back next June."

Here was a child who had traveled in the West, who recognized and appreciated natural beauty. He had been interested in mountains and sunsets and had read several stories about them. He was filled with pride about owning a home in Estes Park. He had had many advantages which other children had not experienced. At the same time he was acquiring a sensitivity to the things about him.

Later in the week the group discussed how a community becomes beautiful. How the mountains and the lowland affect the building of houses. A geographic and geological study of various sections of the United States was made. Large pictures of mountains, national and state parks were secured. When the pictures were hung and everyone was admiring the views while some indulged in wishful thinking, it was Arthur who sighed heavily and said: "Pictures you can buy but pretty sunsets you wish for."

Yes, one of the most delightful experiences a teacher can have is to help children find the information which opens new doors and windows to them. As they become accustomed to searching for the truth, a new and different feeling gradually develops. It is one of understanding and then appreciation; one of recognition and then respect. It becomes the basis for co-operation and sharing. It is the foundation on which all human relationships are built.

How Much Language Form Shall We Teach?

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Few teachers have gone to the extreme of teaching no mechanics and usage in the language program. Many, however, devote so much time to drill in language form that little time is left for the larger phases of language growth. In this helpful article Miss Camenisch urges the teacher to concentrate upon a limited number of usages in order to confine to a minimum the time devoted to mechanics.

—Editor.

This article is concerned with a plan to help the ordinary teacher in an elementary school to improve the mechanics of the language work of the children in a modern program. The whole force of this presentation is lost if we do not keep in mind the following facts with regard to the desirable social methods of teaching language. But first let us see what is *not* advocated in such a modern program.

What The Modern Teacher Does Not Do

Among other things modern acceptable teaching of language mechanics (usage, grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure) does not mean are separate lessons for their own sake, unrelated to work done by the pupils.

It does not mean an impossible standard that includes items on disputed forms.

It does not mean hours of drill on even the most important items.

It does not mean piece-meal mastery of isolated items or principles or that such mastery alone will guarantee effective expression.

It does not mean such emphasis on correction that the pupil is made conscious only of form or is inhibited in his expression.

Developing A General Program

Now let us see what is advocated for a general program.

We pre-suppose that the teachers entrusted with the responsibility of guiding the language development of children have a background of adequate training in language and literature, a knowledge of children, and a knowledge of methods or techniques to help the child grow in his control of the language arts. In all three of these requirements he or she should continue to grow. Furthermore, he should make up any of his deficiencies by conscious and applied study.

It is desirable that there shall be some sort of program in the entire school for carrying this area as well as other areas of the total job of education for the child. In the field of the language arts the school program should probably be worked out by continuous conferences including the administrators and the teachers. Discussion of controversial ideas can be stimulating, but there is enough agreement on fundamental points so that a workable program can be carried out. It is not a rigid meting out of points or principles, semester by semester, that is advocated, but a large over-all view of the entire problem all through the grades. This program should be continually scrutinized, criticized, improved and extended. Some

schools do this by rigid adherence to a course of study that has been worked out locally. Some agree on a standard of usage to which all agree. In any case teachers should not be working at cross purposes and either over-emphasizing or omitting "essential" principles or items. Needless to say, there should be a library, a laboratory, or some other place where new materials, magazines, and books may be consulted.

Basing Instruction On Pupil Need

The modern or social method of teaching language bases its instruction on the needs of the pupils. Unless they see that what they are learning is to help them express themselves more acceptably, progress will not be great. Important as motivation is in the social method, there is yet more to be done. In that other lie also the skills of teaching.

Let us take first oral communication. The committee or group working on the school language program will do well to consider the vernacular of the local group. When the most highly educated and cultivated people in a region say *goin'*, and *doin'*, and *rainin'*, it would be foolhardy to waste the time on trying to make the children say *going*, *doing*, *raining*. Colloquial expressions that are truly local add charm to speech. Few advocate complete standardization, although all children should be led to note the fact of local variations and to be interested in striving for acceptable wider standards.

But objectionable local deviations from standard speech can be attacked successfully only if there is a desire to improve and if the attack be made by the entire school environment continuously. This is not to say that all should be attacked at once.

All the phases of mechanics that enter into oral composition, such as enunciation, loudness of voice, position while standing, and forms of courtesy should be held for as required, and if possible the best place for emphasis allocated to them with provision for continually holding so that habit forming can take place in actual communication situations. Sentence recognition must begin early and its development be continuous. Growth of vocabulary is a part of both content and form. Learning how to use the dictionary for pronunciation and later for meaning is a problem in form that requires a program in itself. Grammar and usage present difficulties that can be overcome by intelligent study and placement. Sometimes the item in usage is not a question of grammar, as in the use of *leave* for *let* to indicate permission; and sometimes it is as in the use of "them things." Wherever an essential principle of grammar is concerned two different kinds of things must be done; the acceptable form must be presented, taught, understood, and applied; and its use in communication must be constantly and consciously applied until reasonable mastery is attained. This does not mean that a pupil is corrected every time he makes an error when he is carrying on a connected discourse or has to put his mind on the content or its organization. But eventually there should be improvement in the learning of acceptable forms, or the school has failed in one of its important functions of giving children the necessary tools of the language arts so that they have a fair chance to be literate citizens or at least should not be unduly handicapped by inability to express themselves in literate language.

Now it is one of the glories of the modern, social school that the elementary

school pupil has full and free opportunity to express himself. We gain control over spoken language as we have opportunity to use it. Moreover, it has been observed that keen interest in what he is saying not only makes a child more eloquent but it actually makes him more accurate. Time to do this has necessarily come from the longer hours spent on grammar as such. Also in the modern program such larger matters as principles of rhetoric receive attention at the expense of time spent on details.

But there still remains the fact that there are principles of grammar that should be taught and mastered to such an extent that gross illiteracies like *I seen, I done, them things, ain't got no, we was, him and me went*, are gradually eliminated and the principle so mastered that it can be applied to new situations.

But in all this the teaching of an item or a principle should be based on actual performance in the communication of children. It is their needs that must be met. It is they who should see that learning the point will make their speech more clear or acceptable.

Written Communication

In written communication there is a much larger amount of mechanics involved. In the first place, neatness of manuscript and conformity in giving items called for in the heading are qualities that should be continuously held for and that will prove desirable qualities in citizens. Legible penmanship should be shown to be socially desirable and possible of achievement by all. Only by realizing all through the grades that these are important can anything like desirable results be achieved. And this is not done by taking the emphasis from the larger matters but by forming gradu-

ally a habit that will be time-saving and effective.

Expressing one's ideas in writing is so difficult a task that the early steps should be taken with great care and with constructive attitudes. The newer way is to give the child all the help he asks in spelling, punctuation, and other forms. Criticism that is discouraging should be avoided and yet improvement should be shown to be desirable.

Perhaps most of the teaching of grammar will come in connection with written communication. There are definite principles of grammar that can and should be taught throughout the grades. There are some children from homes where the child has learned acceptable speech patterns by imitation, who may not need these key lessons, but for those few exceptions other arrangements can be made. There is a place for group instruction that is effective and time saving.

Dr. Fries has pointed out that there has been over-emphasis on incorrect forms in grammar and that the larger phases of grammar have been neglected. But he also argues that it is the obligation of the school to see that each child has an opportunity to develop in language so that he is not socially handicapped. The most liberal modern language scholar would not approve of overlooking or condoning gross illiteracies any more than a leader of an orchestra would say that it made no difference if wrong notes were struck. Scientific investigations such as those by Dr. Fries indicate that some forms are not used by people who have any great degree of education.

Teach Only Important Principles

It is because language is dynamic and changes that we must be most careful to

use precious time for teaching for the purposes of improving language arts only those principles of grammar that are important and that are rewarding. Among such principles are the recognition of the dual aspect of a sentence; such forms as the plurals of nouns, the forms of verbs, especially the past and perfect tenses of irregular verbs; the case forms of the personal pronoun (with "it is me" permissible as a colloquial form); and the separate forms of adverbs and adjectives. Further than these perhaps a better way of spending time with pupils would be in discussing how this or that garbled expression could be changed to indicate the meaning more clearly, and this is not a question of items or principle that can be taught as such.

Space forbids more than a random enumeration of necessary mechanics. Some of the items to be worked on, that often appear in early work and sometimes persist in adult work, are the use of *ain't*, *youse*, the double negative, *hissself*, *them things*, *hollered*, *busted*, *snuck*, *him* and *we went*, *costed*, and *hurted*, *I seen* or *have saw*, *have broke*, *worser*, and *beautifulest*. Many of the immature forms disappear gradually. In about the intermediate grades more attention can be given to eliminating *my mother she*, *leave* for *let*, *lay* for *lie* (only a beginning can be made on these troublesome verbs), *set* for *sit*, *learn* for *teach*, *bring* for *take*.

Important principles to teach in developmental lessons at a separate period from one of communication in activities include these on verb forms: forming past and perfect tense of regular verbs, including *drown* and *attack*; forming past, perfect, and progressive forms of irregular verbs. Such authoritative lists as those by Dr. Fries and recent dic-

tionaries should be consulted. Attention to the spelling problem here should be given. The following are frequent offenders: *lead* for *led*, *choosen* for *chosen*, *loose* and *loosing* for *lose* and *losing*; *stoped*, *dinning*, *writting*, and *occured* for *stopped*, *dining*, *writing*, and *occurred*.

Important principles such as the following should be taught: the regular forms for plurals of nouns and pronouns, agreement of verbs with subjects, with emphasis on the third person singular form, case forms of personal pronoun; the regular principles for distinguishing an adjective form from that of adverbs and methods of comparison of each; (common violations are *more heavier*, *slept good*, *a* and *an*, proper use of *too* and *there*, and *this here* and *that there*); the simplest principles of punctuation, capitalization, and miscellaneous mechanics, presented as needed, and held for. Apparently many adults have not been sufficiently checked in childhood in writing correct forms of contractions and possessives. Such forms as *its* for *it is*, *doesn't*, *didnt*, *boy's* for *boys*, and the use of *your's*, *their's*, *hers'*, *ours'*, require special attention perhaps in the upper grades. Always pupils should be led to investigate the forms of language themselves and to desire to master standard forms discriminately.

To those acquainted with the entire field it will seem desirable to observe sequences. In earliest grades the emphasis on the use of the double negative will be on gross forms as *aint got no*; *didn't have no* is more common and not so objectional as the former. As the pupil advances, *I haven't hardly any* may occur. So, too, with agreement. Note the stages: *the boys was*, *we was*, *he don't*, *one of the boys were*.

In the foregoing little knowledge of technical grammar or terms is necessary for the pupil, but the teacher must know it and what and when and where to teach the items most profitable to attack. Only by intelligent and constant attack can satisfactory progress be made.

How to teach effectively these principles is another story. Such a program should supplement one on the skills of discourse, but the elimination of single items like these can go far to remove gross illiteracy.

Punctuation presents a great problem because the items that are really necessary must be understood by the teacher. Changes in punctuation have taken place and it challenges any one to keep up current acceptable practices. It is better to under-punctuate than over-punctuate. Capitalization and the use of apostrophes also have changed. However, it is not yet assumed in this country that the omitted period after an abbreviation or the apostrophe in a noun in the posses-

sive case is acceptable and not the mark of ignorance or carelessness. Here the attitude of the teacher and the group and the value of a program are an asset. So few are the principles really necessary that if they are spread out over the course, time can be taken to teach them thoroughly, without taking time from more important activities.

The alarming number of "errors" in mechanics in the products of the schools is due to several causes. Surely one is that the point is not considered as important. Another is that the person actually does not know. He has never been shown or taught. Another is that he is careless. Adequate attention to all of these difficulties should secure tremendous improvement. We should not want to go back to the days when an enormous amount of time was spent on mechanics at the expense of the other language arts, but we do not want to have gained a whole world of so-called language arts at the expense of literacy.

Democratic Practices in the Language Arts

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The author points out in concrete terms the fundamental role of language in the democratic process, and sets standards for wholesome human relationships in the classroom. Dr. Baxter's recent book, TEACHER-PUPIL RELATIONSHIPS, has attracted wide attention.

—Editor.

The teacher who attempts to guide and direct language development is touching a most potent avenue of social learning. Since language is an individual's outward expression of inward feeling it is an active process. The teacher may discuss words after they are spoken or written but even then there is always the chance that the discussion may blight the desire to future expression. Instruction must find ways and means of protecting language as a vehicle of self-expression from being stultified by analysis or well intentioned but poorly timed constructive criticism.

Since democracy's principal concern is the socializing of the individual and since language is a tool of socialization, the way in which language is taught is additionally significant in the development of democratic social behavior. Through wise guidance in the language arts, individuals may grow in satisfying self-expression which fosters security for self and leads to acceptance of others. Certain classroom practices may be termed democratic because they promote individual well-being and so encourage co-

operativeness and social good will which are the components of democracy in action.

Principles And Practices

Probably the first principle which has implications for teaching democratically in the language arts is the teacher's responsibility for helping each child to be accepted as he is. This is not a principle which is observed easily in teaching. A most common tendency is for the teacher to correct faulty usage when it occurs. In fact, the announcement of the "language period" in many classrooms is the signal for readiness for error finding. Children with poorest language facility become the focal points of correction. It often becomes the task of the class during a language period to give complete attention to the detection of errors while children who need to improve their spoken language struggle to express themselves.

In recent years, there has been considerable improvement in changing negative classroom environments into somewhat more positive climates. However, the practice of confusing the time for free and spontaneous expression and the time for analysis and correction still persists to the detriment of the individual's security. The practice is still a controversial one with teachers and is not just a thoughtless habit.

The answer to the issue seems to be rooted in this first principle of accepting the child as he is. Every person needs to

be accepted with some degree of approval if security is to be maintained and fostered. To the extent that this right is denied a child he is likely to try to justify his own inabilities at the expense of others. Teachers who are too eager to have children correct their faulty usage often belittle children in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. This is undermining and provocative of "cover-up" or resentment. Correct speech is a personal asset but if acquired with a loss of self-esteem and hurt which may cause the child to "strike out" at his peers, the worth of this asset is extremely doubtful.

Skilfully the teacher has to divorce poor usage from the user and make a frontal and positive attack on the correct form at a time when personal expression is not at stake. This must be done without casting derogatory reflection upon the maker of the error. Such maintenance and preservation of an individual's security is not a whim of the "soft pedagogue." It is an essential in preventing the projection of insecurities upon others, a practice definitely detrimental to functioning democracy.

The Audience Situation

A second principle which may or may not be self-evident is the necessity for giving language its right direction, that is, having it always directed away from the speaker or writer to the hearer or reader. From the earliest stages of instruction, if the teacher will help the child to realize that he speaks because he has something worth someone's attention, language will come to serve as a channel of outgoingness toward others. An individual's attitudes toward others simultaneously are directed with his desire to convey and contribute his thoughts. Attention is outward and not inward,

when speaking and writing are done for their worth to others. This is an important principle which may be made productive of habits of thought and action which are foundational to democratic behavior.

There is a fallacy, however, in over-emphasis of the audience situation. Positive, convincing speech results with the sincere desire to express ideas. Too much attention to convincing one's hearers may be as detrimental to free expression as too much attention to self. Effective practice in the language arts demands that teachers establish an integrity of purpose in communication which will free children of both too much self attention and at the same time too much attention to the audience. Teaching procedure which calls for this insight and delicacy of touch is indeed an art to be cultivated.

Language As A Social Instrument

A third principle which is foundational in the directing of teaching toward democratic behavior outcomes is the necessity for consistent building of the skills of group discussion. In the elementary school, there is growing acceptance of the responsibility for teaching appropriate language usage for specific social needs, such as manner of address, proper introductions and salutations, telephone greetings, letter forms and numerous other functional uses for language, both oral and written. Classrooms are converted into imagined social situations in which these particular language forms are used. Children are learning in as realistic a manner as the classroom permits.

Natural, spontaneous conversation of children oftentimes is not considered a part of the language arts program. Opportunities are lost for guiding the discussion which goes on within groups of children who are planning and talking

with each one another as they work. Both teachers and children should be alert to conversational skills as they relate to the exchange of ideas, the formulation of policies and plans and the evaluation of results. Evaluation usually concerns itself with the plan of work or the results of the plan, the organization of those involved and the outcomes produced. Improvement in time required to discuss and to arrive at group decisions is all too seldom an item of appraisal. Elementary school children who have their attention called to ways in which language may facilitate creative results of individuals working together have a genuine foundation for later understanding use of parliamentary procedure and other less formal means for reaching majority decisions. Consideration of ways and means for arriving at group decisions should not be neglected.

Parents as well as teachers and children should be aroused to an interest in not only their children's co-operative behavior but also to their growing knowledge of how co-operative behavior may be furthered. The expressional skills are the means by which individuals accomplish collective results. They should be the subject of direct study in addition to being acquired. The future of democratic government probably rests as much upon an awareness to the skills of group discussion as upon any one other single factor.

Language And Human Relations

A fourth consideration, probably not coordinate with the principles thus far enumerated but of first importance, is the practice of the teacher in selecting for reading and for dramatic play and reproduction content which artistically depicts the attitudes and ideals of democracy—fair play, kindness, courage, and co-

operation itself. Utilitarian themes have tended to supersede those of human relations. Like other materialistic aspects of American life which are being replaced, a little more swing back to the virtues of human co-operation may be timely for the redirecting of the education of elementary school children.

In the experimental studies of Kurt Lewin and his associates at the University of Iowa¹ which were conducted in the interest of ascertaining the effects of democratic, laissez-faire and authoritarian leadership upon boys and girls, the manner of speech and actions of the leaders were highly significant in their effect upon "climate." It was found that the free movements of club members were narrowed under authoritarian leadership and less friendly responsiveness was manifested toward the authoritarian leader and toward one another than was true under more democratic leadership. The author's own study of teacher-pupil relationships also indicated that children's classroom conduct tends to become like that of the teacher. The spoken word is the most potent medium of contact in classroom. Children treat each other as they are treated by the teacher. The attitudes expressed by the words of a leader or teacher imprint themselves into the behavior of impressionable boys and girls. Therefore, as a last and all-inclusive principle which affects practice, is the behavior of the teacher as an atmosphere-determining influence.

Criteria For Teaching Procedures

The language arts might be separated into their component elements and instruction therein made specific. That

¹Lewin, Kurt; Lippitt, Ronald; and Escalona, Sibylle K. *Studies in Topological and Vector Psychology I*. University of Iowa Studies in Child Welfare, Vol. XVI, No. 3, Iowa City: Univ. of Iowa Press, February, 1940.

which constitutes democratic practice within each area might be listed in great detail. Such is not possible in an article of this length. It must be left to the teacher to analyze his own instructional procedures. As an aid in determining whether or not teaching procedures are directed toward developing behavior which is democratic, the following questions, which are based on the enumerated principles, may prove helpful.

1. Is my teaching of the language arts resulting in increased understanding of children, one of another?

2. Are the language art skills which

I am trying to have children acquire producing a lessening of tensions and blockings; is there more "out-goingness" on the part of pupils?

3. Are boys and girls realizing that they are becoming increasingly successful in group enterprise because they know how to formulate, discuss and evaluate procedures and results co-operatively?

4. Are the books which children are reading building for them a background of understanding of democracy?

5. Do I exemplify, particularly in my comments, the attitudes which are inherent in co-operative behavior?

Adventures in Democratic Living

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How one school provides direct experience in the social uses of language which are basic to the techniques of democratic planning and decision is vividly described in this article, which was first read at a conference at the University of Minnesota.

—Editor.

When we think of democratic living do we not mean that many different people faced with problems of common concern, pool and sift their ideas and attempt to put into practice the group decisions reached by this process of interchange?

If we wish to teach children how to take their places effectively in the democratic life must we not try to provide an approximation of the social scene and process? Must we not think of these learnings as a group of skills and abilities and attitudes? Must we not also teach

children to accept their responsibility willingly and appreciate their privilege deeply?

Any single group of children offers a good learning situation on a small scale. Better still is the whole school of several grades working as unit, for there we have more people, therefore more ideas, greater differences in maturity, in experience, in ability. In the wider situation one can work out the principle of representation more satisfactorily. Also there are many excellent problems of interest to all ages.

In our school we have been much interested in developing more inter-grade relationships. Our older and younger children not only sing and play together, but they are learning to work together. Certain techniques which we have used may be of interest.

Setting up the machinery for representation. Each grade has its own affairs to transact, but for this school-wide business each grade elect representatives to each of several all-school councils and committees. Qualifications are set up for the work of each committee, and the children must keep these qualifications in mind, electing the best man for the job, rather than showing favor to their friends. Each council or committee works on the problems in some area of importance. So far the areas in which we have central councils or committees are these:

1. The Principal's Council, working on new policies or procedures of a general nature.
2. The Boy Patrol Squad.
3. The Junior Red Cross Council.
4. The Health and Safety Committee.
5. The Property Care Committee.
6. The Miscellaneous Service Committee—milk delivery, absence blanks, kindergarten helpers and the like.

Each council has a staff sponsor, meets at regular times, keeps minutes, and reports business back to its grade group.

Learning to raise problems. It is necessary that children become aware of needs and formulate them as problems. We must give the elementary child individual help in expressing his problem clearly.

Helping to define and clarify the problem. This is important. "Do you mean this?" "Show us what you mean" are comments which help to bring out the implications of the problem.

Deciding whose job the problem is. Do we already have a committee to take care of this business? If not, who shall do it?

Discussing possible solutions. Once awake to the meaning of the problem,

the group which gets the problem to work on begins to make suggestions for solving it. Many suggestions are entertained, discussed, and evaluated. In a democracy all voices may be heard, but the quality of the idea is an important consideration. Recognizing possible sources of help is also good training. Shall we look in a book? Will an interview with someone help? Shall we refer the problem to a larger group?

The grade groups also get the problems to discuss, and this forum of public opinion helps to shape up the solutions. Children need to learn how to differ courteously with each other, to qualify one another's statements, and to be sympathetic with the earnest attempts of younger or less able children. We need to have specific help in learning to make motions, to be a chairman, to count votes, to take notes, and to abide by majority opinion. In one room we have a chart headed "How to be a Good Chairman." Our teachers, whether in the grade groups or as sponsors of the committees, take this duty of guidance very seriously.

Carrying out group decisions. Once group decisions are made and accepted by all, the children expect them to be carried out. Here they learn a valuable lesson, that human nature can be educated rather than coerced into co-operation. Allocating the work to various individuals is another job to be done in carrying out group decisions. Dealing with those who do not carry out group agreements brings up some interesting problems. There are pressure groups at work even in lower grades.

But no amount of machinery will suffice unless we can develop a consciousness that this is democratic living and that is good. We need to point out to children

that in some countries they would not be invited to sit around a conference table. Teachers may also get over to children their own deep appreciation of the American way. The theory of reasonableness, however, should create its own happiness. The children should be able to see for themselves that democracy really works.

For years the children have evolved codes of behavior in the manner described. A problem has been attacked, worked out, and the agreement reached has been typed and each room has it. We have courtesy codes, bathroom codes, snowballing codes, and others. The children have outlawed knives on the playground. Also the water gun "because what makes it fun makes others wet and uncomfortable." The important agreement in the snowballing code says that one can agree to play snowballing with others in a place where neither people or property can be interfered with, but having agreed to play, one must not complain if hit. Occasionally we have strong minority opinions. One year we had been at work making a courtesy code. We found opposition on the part of three fifth grade boys to the idea of boys and men paying special deference to girls and women. They felt that they could not subscribe to that portion of the code, and turned in a minority report to the effect that "if girls had done hard work from little on they would not need to be babied when they got older." The report was accepted in all seriousness and the recommendation made that they observe the behavior of men and boys in their homes and elsewhere. It is interesting to see that apparently observation helped them eventually to favor the code.

One of our councils initiated the idea of a service assembly, at which all inter-

grade councils and committees could be introduced to the children. Each committee could explain its function and its plans and could ask for co-operation in its program. We carried out the assembly with a back-drop of flags and sang patriotic songs to emphasize the idea that when we serve our school we serve our country. Each council was introduced by one of its members and various children gave short talks describing their work. The various councils had devised colorful armbands which were worn at the assembly. We felt that the assembly had given the idea of service, dignity, and importance, and had emphasized that no committee could function without the co-operation of every child.

Two projects of an all-school nature are now under way, both sponsored by the Principal's Council. One is the making of a handbook in each room, similar in content but different in style, phrasing, and illustrations. Each handbook will be a record of the agreements that have been reached for play and work and will be a source of reference when in doubt as to what these agreements are. The other is a skills exchange project. We have made a survey of some of the jobs which children know how to do and of those that they would like to learn how to do. We will need the help of our parents in the project. We hope to set up many inter-grade teaching situations, some taught by children, some by parents, some by teachers. We may see a second grade child conducting a class in the care of plants, or another child showing how to wash out his hose. In the end we hope to aid the manpower situation materially in the home during war time, as well as to afford children security through usefulness.

The Educational Scene

Recent pamphlet publications of interest to classroom teachers: *Films for America At War*, prepared under the guidance of the Committee on Motion Pictures in Education of the American Council on Education. Contains essential information on 114 war-related films, dealing with war production, civilian participation in the war effort, health, nutrition, and first aid. Available at the office of the American Council on Education, 744 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C., at \$1.00 per copy. The Office of War Information in Washington offers (free) a *List of U. S. War Information Films*, containing full information concerning government films relating to the armed forces, aviation training, civilian defense, and government agencies.

A series of resource units under the general title, "Problems of Race and Culture in American Education," is sponsored by the Service Bureau for Intercultural Education, 221 West 57th Street, New York City, and published by Harper's. In addition to the introductory manual the series includes documents called *Dramatizing Community Culture Problems in the Public Schools*, by Francis Bosworth, *Let's Look at Negro America*, by Edmonia White Grant, *Historical Backgrounds of Ethnic Differences*, by Bruno Lasker and William A. Humm, and *Peoples of the United States*, by Simon Marcson. On the same subject, the U. S. Office of Education has published in its "Education and National Defense" series an attractive pamphlet called *National Unity Through Intercultural Education*, by Rachel Davis-DuBois. It includes a report of experiences on the primary, in-

termediate grade, and junior high school levels.

On the subject of reading, upper grade teachers will be much interested in the pamphlet *They All Like To Read*, by Franc J. Thyng, a study of reading attitudes and patterns of eleven- and twelve-year-olds. The bulletin, which is published by the Association for Arts in Childhood, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City, contains also an essay by J. Wayne Wrightstone on "An Evaluation of Adolescent Reading Interests." Price, 15 cents. Other publications on reading include a group published by the Bureau of Reference, Research, and Statistics of the Board of Education of the City of New York. The titles are. *Check List for Reviewing a Reading Curriculum*, *Reading Readiness in the First Grade*, and *A Diagnostic Approach to the Reading Program*, Parts I and II.

A number of timely booklists have just been published by the American Library Association, 520 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill. *The Booklist* for December 15, 1942, contains an annotated list of *U. S. Government Publications and The War*, by Carl H. Melinat, with complete publication facts. Reprints from other issues of the *Booklists* provide bibliographies on postwar planning, *Our Neighbors To The South, China* (books for children and young people), and *The Far East*.



The United States Committee on Educational Reconstruction (2 West 45th Street, New York City), is furthering a proposal to form an International Education Office for the purpose of formulating

broad educational aims and methods to inculcate the spirit and practice of democracy in all peoples of all nations. The plan is to have the Office functioning at the end of the war, so that it will be ready to propose educational patterns for the United States as well as the enemy nations. The purpose would not be to force the objectives of democracy on the peoples of the world, but to make available ideas, aids, and suggestions as to educational goals which nations might adopt.

Looking ahead also is the Committee on Planning for Education of the U. S. Office of Education, which recently declared that the school of tomorrow should provide at least ten pupil services: formally organized teaching, educational and vocational guidance, library services, extra-curriculum activities, work experience, junior placement services, transportation and lunch facilities, health services, and camp experiences.

The Division of Educational Services of the Office of War Information (Fourteenth and Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D. C.) may now be consulted regarding materials for study and discussion groups, information for student periodicals, and facts about young people in the United Nations and enemy countries.

The *A. L. A. Bulletin* reports that the Library Association of Great Britain has awarded the Carnegie Medal for an outstanding book for children in 1941 to Mary Treadgold for her book, *We Couldn't Leave Dinah*. This story, which has been published in this country by

Doubleday under the title, *Left Till Called For*, tells of the Nazi occupation of an Anglo-French island and of two English children who did not get away.

The February, 1943, issue of *Childhood Education* is devoted to the theme, "Developing Creative Abilities." Numerous delightful articles deal with the subject of creative writing.

In order to secure objective evidence of the relationship between reading scores on standardized tests and reading ability in the field of science, Esther J. Swenson compared the performance of 217 eighth-grade pupils on the Traxler Silent Reading Test and a series of science reading tests measuring rate, comprehension, and vocabulary. She found not only that a good reader as measured by one type of reading test is likely to be a good reader according to other types of reading tests, but that there was close correspondence between performance on specific language skills in the two types of tests. The report of the study was published in the *Journal of Educational Research* for October, 1942.

A full report of the Proceedings of the fifth annual meeting of the School Broadcast Conference held recently in Chicago, along with a volume of "Utilization Practices" for 1943, as reported by classroom teachers, is now available. Teachers who wish help in utilizing radio programs in the classroom should write for these documents to Mr. George Jennings, acting director, at 228 N. LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Review and Criticism

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

Bonnie's Baby Brother. By Elizabeth Rider Montgomery. Frederick A. Stokes Company, Pp. 95. \$2.00

A charming story of a five-year-old girl and her baby brother, told to a great extent in pictures. The text is simple and direct.

The Last Of The Sea Otters. By Harold McCracken. Frederick A. Stokes Company. \$2.00

A story of the interesting and adventurous life of a sea otter, based on observations made by the author along the coast of Alaska. The beautiful lithographs add charm.

Inside Out. By Gertrude E. Mallette. Doubleday Doran. \$2.00

Exciting and clever entertainment, especially for girls of junior high school age. The scene is on the Hudson River. While convalescing from scarlet fever, Linda Sherrell, who is learning to be a painter, uses her talent for observing details to help the F. B. I. trap a gang of enemy aliens.

Tidewater Tales. By Anne Littlefield Locklin. The Viking Press. \$2.00

The adventures of two boys, Wib and Fred Field, are based upon the boyhood experiences of the author's grandfather. The scene is New Hampshire, along the Squamscott River. Every tale is neatly built up to a climax and full of lifelike details recreating the fields and streams, the seasons and the sports which the New Hampshire boys loved. A swimming test, blueberrying, camping, and a sail boat race provide the kind of incidents which enter into these family tales.

Up the Hill. By Marguerite De Angeli. Doubleday Doran. \$2.00

A story by the author of *Elin's Amerika*. In the school of a Pennsylvania mining town the children wear European costumes and report on the lands of their parents. Aniela wears her Polish costume, becomes acquainted with a painter, and persuades him to help her brother, Tod, who wants to become an artist. Spirited reading for the intermediate grades. Pen drawings and vivid colored illustrations.

Ludwig Beethoven and the Chiming Tower Bells. By Opal Wheeler. Illustrated by Mary Greenwalt. Dutton. \$2.00

Opal Wheeler has portrayed the romantic excitement of Beethoven's rise from a childhood passion for music to adult fame as a composer. Incidents of his personal life are deftly woven into the story of his spiritual and artistic genius. Like the other books in the series on great musicians (Bach, Haydn), the Beethoven is excellently printed and illustrated and it contains a fine selection of music for the young pianist. Children from eight to fifteen will enjoy this book.

Cowbells for Forget-Me-Not. By Helen Condon. Illustrated by Dorothy Lee Beals. Thomas Nelson and Sons. Pp. 72. \$1.50

When Marti and Rosi left the beautiful Alpine country of Switzerland to live in northern Michigan, they found many new delights to replace their homesick memories. But the tie that linked them most closely to Grandfather and Grandmother in Interlaken was Forget-Me-Not, Marti's pet baby calf. Not even a calf

can go to pasture in dignity without a cow-bell, but Marti's search for just the right bell for his pet reached even to his native Swiss village, finally to be successful on Christmas day when he found the sweetest, tiniest bell of gold, trimmed with an edge of the flower of the land—the forget-me-not. For six- to nine-year olds.

Gay Design. By Adele De Leeuw. The Macmillan Co. \$2.00

For the adolescent girl. The career story of Nancy Gay, dress designer, involving the lives of men and women in the amazing number of occupations in "the garment-trade business," from the inexperienced worker in a pattern house to the exclusive stylist and designer. The narrative carries us from the time Nancy leaves art school through her days as a raw recruit, to a final, and not-too-early real success, in a tale of interest and delight.

Top Kick, U. S. Army Horse. By Helen Orr Warson. Illustrated by Bernard Garbutt. Houghton, Mifflin Co. \$2.00

Sired by a horse famous for numerous racing honors, Top Kick, the mischievous, restless colt, had a reputation to maintain and a pedigree to uphold. His long training for the cavalry and his subsequent adventures at Pearl Harbor and with Mac Arthur's forces at Bataan are authentic, for they are written by the wife of a cavalryman and Army Colonel, who draws from a rich fund of information and understanding. It is especially suited to readers from upper intermediate through junior high level.

Jon of the Albany Belle. By Hazel Raybold Langdale. Illustrated by Sandra James. E. P. Dutton. \$2.00

This is a story of life in the 1850's in America, centering especially on the

activities of the Underground Railroad. Jon experiences varied adventures from the time he is pushed overboard the ship *Albany Belle*, as he is taken prisoner as a spy by fur-trappers, and finally to the end of his search for treasure buried in colonial times on the Mohawk River. A historical tale with excitement and mystery to delight children from fourth grade up.

Skywinder Mystery. By Alan Gregg. Illustrated by Thomas Fogarty. Doubleday Doran. \$1.75

An aviation mystery story of the Border Patrol Service. The surprise of spotting a Gumman Widgeon plane on the desert, hidden cameras and films buried like treasure in the sand, rattle-snake stuffed dummies, and disappearing pilots illustrate the excitement of the events. Smoothly flowing style and humorous dialogue.

War-Belts of Pontiac. By William H. Bunce. Illustrated by I. B. Hazelton. E. P. Dutton. \$2.00

The fiery period of the Indian wars around the Great Lakes area is the setting of this story of the great Indian Chief Pontiac. The vocabulary and general structural pattern of the book make it suitable for the average intermediate reader, while its vivid content will make it interesting as well to the older child retarded in reading achievement.

Traveler's Candle. By Florence Maule Updegraff. Illustrated by Eva A. Watson. Harcourt, Brace. \$2.00

The "traveler's candle," a light in the window to symbolize hospitality to the lonely wayfarer, brought Patrick to the Mapes family in Rhode Island in the seventeenth century. Here he made his home, learning the chandler's trade and

sharing in other pioneer duties and festivities. The story stresses the early foundations of American tolerance and its practices. Written especially for the junior high school audience.

A Picture Almanac for Boys and Girls. By Grace L. Kohl. Designed and illustrated by Samuel Nesinson. Garden City Publishing Co.

A reference book for boys and girls, in which each day of the year is featured with a page of unusual pictures, anecdotes, and interesting information pertaining to that date in history. In its pages are commemorated notable birthdays, science discoveries and inventions, and facts about the weather and the stars. Even February 29 is replete with leap year superstitions and customs. Contains a very complete index for ease in general usage.

Three Smart Squirrels and Squee. By Margaret Friskey. Illustrated by Lucia Patton. David McKay. \$1.00

This is a story of four squirrels, one of whom gets into trouble much of the time. Squee is of concern not only to his family of squirrels but to all who live in the woods. He is a very forgetful squirrel and therefore not very reliable. The story contains enough humor to be of interest to young children. The illustrations are delightful and sufficiently simple that children are able to enjoy the book before they can read the story.

The Monkey Turns. Written and illustrated by Inez Hogan. E. P. Dutton. \$1.00

Again Inez Hogan has given children of the elementary school another animal story. This time she has created a jungle scene to which the effects of modern warfare have come. Her illustrations are vivid and filled with action. The animals, in true proportion, are life-like. Children in the second, third and fourth grades will enjoy this story about the organization for war in which all the jungle animals participate. Although it is apparent that Miss Hogan has created this story to aid children in securing a better understanding of our "adult war vocabulary" she has been sufficiently artistic and entertaining in both the text and illustrations to make the book attractive to children.

Airplane Andy. By Sanford Tousey. Doubleday Doran. \$1.00

Boys from seven through eleven years of age will enjoy this airplane story written and illustrated by Sanford Tousey. It is the story of a young boy whose father is a pilot. Consequently Andy is very much interested in airplane construction and has been quite successful in creating a new model plane. He takes a trip with his father and proves himself to be very helpful in an emergency. Children will enjoy the adventurous yet factual theme of the story.

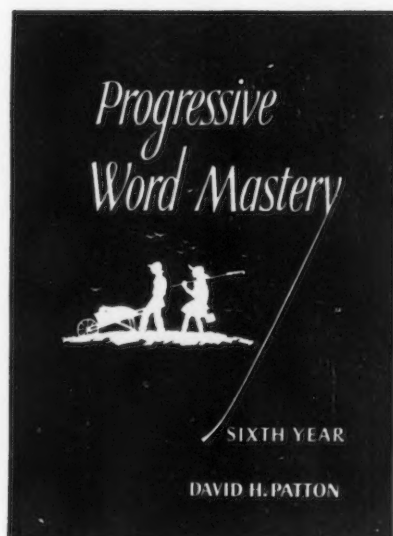
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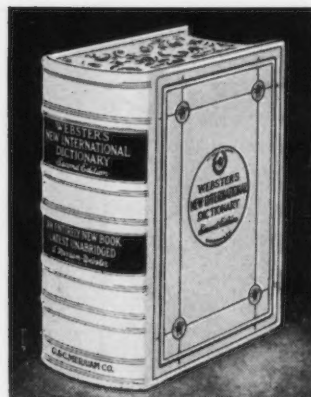
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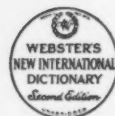


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